

houses in Mecca; according to modern travellers, this question is purely academic, since the inhabitants largely earn their living by letting their houses to pilgrims.

The place of Mecca in the Muslim religion is otherwise not free from anomalies. On the one hand, it is clear that the standard of morality and piety practised by the inhabitants has at no time been particularly high, and various travellers have been shocked by their experiences; on the other hand, there is no doubt about the sanctity of the place and the spiritual benefits that accrue to those who go thither. These are not indeed free from danger; for, just as the value of good actions is higher in Mecca than elsewhere, so the debt incurred by evil deeds is there increased; and, according to the Sūfīs, evil thoughts and intentions are punished in Mecca, but not elsewhere. If Abū Ṭalīb al-Makki († 886 A.H.) is right, pious men in early times who went thither on pilgrimage used to pitch two tents, one within and another outside the sacred area, devoting the former exclusively to religious exercises.¹ The resulting danger should breed contempt and the fact that absence makes the heart grow fonder. It could also be urged that, according to the Qurʾān, 'the House' is a place of returning, i.e. one to be visited, not made a place of residence (ii. 119).

The various sovereigns who have been protectors or 'servants' of the sanctuaries have ordinarily been lavish in marks of their favour and somewhat jealous of munificence exercised by rival potentates; among the public works executed by these benefactors the greatest amount of space appears to be devoted in the Chronicles to the aqueducts; one which conveys water from Mt. Arafat to Mecca, utilizing a channel originally constructed by order of Zubaida, wife of Ḥarūn al-Rashīd, occupied fourteen years (965-979 A.H.) and cost enormous sums, owing to the difficulty of piercing the rock and the primitive character of the methods in use. Numerous colleges, hospitals, and almshouses have been erected by Islamic sovereigns and their ministers, many of them furnished with endowments. The fate of all pious foundations in Mecca, according to Snouck Hurgronje,² is the same: most of the houses that have any value have been at some time or other purchased in order to serve as endowment, but gradually passed from hand to hand in such a way that they retain the name *waqf* (on which see *ERE* vii. 877 f.), without serving any pious purpose. The name, however, prevents their being legally sold, yet sale is often necessary, and this is effected in fact, though new names are employed to serve instead of 'sale' and 'purchase.' An attempt was made by a Turkish resident in the middle of the 19th cent. to declare all such transactions invalid, but his removal was procured before this could be carried out.

The erection of the places of learning has not had the effect of rendering Mecca at any time a university centre, and its printing-press has contributed very little to Arabic literature; nevertheless as a gathering-place for the pious it has regularly served for the dissemination of ideas, which are worked out elsewhere. A. Le Chatelier, indeed, attributes the part played by Mecca in recent times to the influence of the Sāfiyās:

'La confrérie nouvelle rendit à la Mecque le rôle de foyer du fanatisme musulman, que lui avait fait perdre la caste sacerdotale' (*Les Confréries musulmanes de Hadjras*, Paris, 1887, p. 19).

The author of a dialogue on Islamic revival be-

¹ *Qist al-quṣṣ*, Cairo, 1310, ii. 119.

² *Hyā' al-ḥim al-dīn*, Cairo, 1306, i. 190.

³ *Op. cit.* p. 164.

tween Muslims of various nationalities recently placed the scene in Mecca.¹ Yet the cosmopolitan character of the pilgrimage appears from the time of the early Islamic conquests to have rendered this sanctuary the place where it was easiest to address the Muslim world as a whole. Deeds of settlement of succession to the khalifate were issued and deposited here by Ḥarūn al-Rashīd.² If a man wished to procure a copy of a rare work, he would have a crier advertise the want among the pilgrims.³

In spite of the rule which forbids access to Mecca on the part of non-Muslims, many Europeans have undertaken the pilgrimage, some indeed having adopted Islam for the purpose of carrying out this project. In *Christians at Mecca* (London, 1909) Augustus Ralli gives accounts of sixteen such visitors, beginning with Ludovico Varthema, 'a gentleman of the city of Rome,' who reached the forbidden city in 1503. Since the publication of Ralli's collection two more English travellers have been added to the list: Hadji Khan and W. Sparrow, *With the Pilgrims to Mecca*, 1908, London, 1905; and A. J. B. Wavell, *A Modern Pilgrim in Mecca*, do. 1912. Among the records of these pilgrimages that by R. F. Burton (*Pilgrimage to El-Medīnah and Meccah*, London, 1855-56) is classical; it adds, however, very little topographical information to that which had been given to the world by J. L. Burckhardt (*Travels in Arabia*, London, 1829). Of the others the account of the city by Snouck Hurgronje (*op. cit.*, 1885) is the most important. In several cases the travellers were so fully occupied with the task of preserving their lives that they had no time to make observations of value; and in not a few instances the veracity of the narrators has been questioned, not without cause. Besides these accounts by Europeans there are many in existence by Muslims, some of whom have employed the French language. It is asserted that the number of the former who have succeeded in witnessing the pilgrimage and returning to tell the tale is small compared with that of those who have sacrificed their lives in the attempt; and those who have accomplished the task safely have in most cases done so by the exercise of great cunning and ingenuity. The plan of H. Maltzan (*Walfahrt nach Mekka*, Leipzig, 1865), who, in order to pass for a Muslim, borrowed the personality of an Algerian, the latter undertaking to remain in hiding for the necessary period, may be commended both for boldness and for astuteness; it was not, however, free from danger.

LITERATURE.—The authorities are cited throughout the article. D. S. MARGOLIOUTH.

MEDALS.—See COINS AND MEDALS.

MEDIAN RELIGION.—The religion of the ancient Medes is one of the most difficult and disputable questions in ancient Oriental history. The statements of the earlier classical authorities are not easy to reconcile with the Iranian Avesta, and fresh elements of difficulty have been introduced by the decipherment of the cuneiform inscriptions.

The actual facts are these. As far back as the 14th cent. B.C. the cuneiform documents of Boghaz Keui have shown that there was an Aryan, but not as yet Iranian, population in Mesopotamia who worshipped the gods Mithra, Varuna (written Uruwana and Aruna), Indra, and the two Nāsatiya, the Vedic correspondents of the Dioscuri (cf. E. Meyer, *SBAW*, 1908, pp. 14-19). In the 9th cent. B.C. this Aryan population had become Iranian,

¹ *Umm al-quṣṣ*, Port Said, 1316.

² *Arriq*, p. 161.

³ *Yāqūt, Dictionary of Learned Men*, ed. D. S. Margoliouth, London, 1907 ff., vi. 72.

and was settled east of the Zagros mountains, where it was known to the Assyrians as Madā, or Medes, a name also written Amadā, like Amardi for Mardi. From this time forward the names of the kings and chiefs of Media and the neighbouring districts mentioned on the Assyrian monuments are Iranian, and in a list of Median princes conquered by Sargon in 714-713 B.C. we find the name of Mazdaku, proving that Zoroaster's god Mazdā, 'the Wise,' was already worshipped (cf. also F. Hommel, *PSBA*, 1899, p. 182). The name of 'Mitra,' the sun-god, is also found in the tablets from Assur-bani-pal's library at Nineveh. On the other hand, Istuvegu, or Astyages, the last king of Ekbatana, is termed in the inscriptions, not 'King of Media, but 'King of the *Umman Manda*' or 'Hordes,' an archaistic title given by the Babylonians in early times to the northern barbarians, but applied in the Assyrian age to the Cimmerians and Scyths (q.v.). The similarity of the names Madā and Manda raises the question whether the Medes of the classical writers who were conquered by Cyrus were not really Scythians whose religious beliefs and practices have been transferred to their Median subjects or neighbours.

Like the Medes, the Persians also were Iranians.¹ But here again the inscriptions make it doubtful whether Cyrus and Cambyses, the founders of the Persian empire, were of pure Iranian stock, and whether the religion of Cyrus, at all events, was not the polytheism of Susa (cf. art. ACHÆMENIANS, vol. i. p. 70). Both he and his son conformed to the ancient worship of Babylonia. Gaumata (Gomates), 'the Magian,' is expressly stated by Darius (*Bh.* [Pera. text] i. 63 f.) to have destroyed the *ayadandā*, or 'prayer-chapels,' of Persia, a word which is translated 'temples of the gods' in the Babylonian version of the Behistūn inscription. These Darius claims to have restored, along with other possessions of the Persian and Median peoples, through the help of the 'great god Auramazdā,' the creator of the earth and heavens, who in the Susian version of the Behistūn inscription (iii. 77, 79) is specially called 'the god of the Aryans.' In the eyes of Darius he occupied much the same place as that occupied by Jahweh in the OT: he was the national god of the Persians and Medes and supreme over all other gods. The existence of the latter, however, was admitted: at Behistūn Darius says that he was assisted not only by Auramazdā but also by 'the other gods, all that there are.' Opposed to the righteous law of Auramazdā was 'the Lie' (*drauga*), the Achaemenian equivalent of the Zoroastrian Angra Mainyu (Ahriman [q.v.]). But there is no reference to the Zoroastrianism of the Avesta in the inscriptions of either Darius or his successors; their priests, moreover, were not Magians, whose overthrow and massacre were, on the contrary, commemorated in the festival of the Magophonia;² and the bodies of the Persian kings seem to have been buried in the ordinary way instead of being thrown to dogs or birds of prey.³ This, Herodotus says (i. 140), was a Magian custom.⁴

The date of Zoroaster (Zarathushtra) is uncertain,

¹ This is the general view, but J. H. Moulton (*Early Zoroastrianism*, London, 1913, pp. 223-236) doubts whether it is correct. He hints that the Medes were the aboriginal inhabitants, and that the Magi (q.v.) were their priests. If this be so, the Medes were neither Iranians nor Semites. He directly states (above, p. 245b) that the Medians 'belonged to neither of the two great races which divided Nearer Asia between them.' Prásek (*Geogr.* i. 3 ff.) urges, in more detail, a similar view.

² For a somewhat different explanation of the Magophonia, see art. FESTIVALS AND FASTS (Iranian), vol. v. p. 874 f.

³ See Moulton, pp. 163, 192 f., 202 f., 217; and cf. art. DEATH AND DISPOSAL OF THE DEAD (Persia), § 15.

⁴ The statement of Agathias (ii. 23), that the Medians buried the dead, whereas the Persians exposed them, is almost certainly wrong.

but modern scholarship is inclined to assign it to the 6th cent. B.C.; and Jackson¹ seems to be right in concluding that he arose in Media rather than in Bactria, the tradition which makes him a Bactrian being late.

Zoroaster is unknown to both Herodotus and Ctesias, the earliest mention of him occurring in a fragment questionably ascribed to Xanthus of Lydia and in Plato (*Alcib. I.*, 122). Herodotus makes the Magi a Median tribe (i. 101),² but he also implies that they were a class of priests (i. 140), and he describes certain of them as interpreters of dreams (i. 107). He further ascribes to them the Zoroastrian practices of reverencing the dog and destroying noxious animals (i. 140). No sacrifice could be offered without the presence of a Magus, who accompanied it with a hymn (the Avestan *Gāthā*); and there was neither altar, fire, nor libation (i. 132). The Greek historian adds (i. 131) that 'the Persians' (whose priests were the Median Magi) had 'no images of the gods and no temples or altars, considering the use of them a sign of folly.' They sacrificed to Zeus (Ahura Mazdā) on the summits of mountains, as well as 'to the sun and moon, to the earth, to fire, to water, and to the winds.' The worship of the goddess Anāhita, and presumably also of Mithra, the sun-god, referred to in two inscriptions of Artaxerxes Mnemon (*Silae* a. 4 f., *Ham.* 5 f.) was borrowed at a later date from 'the Arabians and Assyrians' (Herod. i. 131).³

On the other hand, the scourging of the Hellespont by Xerxes (Herod. vii. 35) is inconsistent with the belief that water was divine,⁴ and in Herodotus's account of Magian religion Avestan dualism is conspicuous by its absence. So, too, is any reference to the doctrine of a resurrection. The simplest way of explaining these anomalies is to suppose that the religious system described by Herodotus was that of the Medes, among whom the Magi were a sort of hereditary priests, like the Levites in Israel; and that the religious system of Darius represented the religion of the Persian aristocracy, but that the origin and fundamental principles of the two were the same. The conquest of Media by Persia would have introduced the Median forms of theology among the Persian people, though their influence would have been momentarily checked by the overthrow of Gomates and his party, who perhaps would have stood in much the same relation to the Achaemenian aristocracy as the Pharisees did to the Sadducees. Meanwhile the reformer Zarathushtra had appeared in Media, where he built upon pre-existing religious beliefs and practices and attracted the Magi to his side. The result in the course of centuries was the Mazdaism of the Avesta.

LITERATURE.—A. V. W. Jackson, *Zoroaster the Prophet of Ancient Iran*, New York, 1890; C. de Harlez, *Avesta*, Paris, 1881; J. Darmesteter, *Le Zend-Avesta*, do. 1892-98, *Études iranienne*, do. 1883; Eduard Meyer, *Geogr. des Altertums*, i. 3, Berlin, 1900; J. von Prásek, *Geogr. der Meder und Perser*, Gotha, 1906-10; G. Rawlinson, 'Media,' in *Five Great Monarchies of the Anc. East*, London, 1862-67; J. Oppert, *Le Peuple et la langue des Mèdes*, Paris, 1879; A. Delattre, *Le Peuple et l'empire des Mèdes*, Brussels, 1883 (= *Mém. couronnées* . . . par l'Académie royale . . . de Belgique, xiv. pt. 1).

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MEDIATION.—Mediation is a word of extreme vagueness, but is here considered only in its technical or quasi-technical applications in religion. In a sense all we are and have is mediated to us somehow. Our very being comes to us through our parents. The society into which we are born and in which we are trained mediates to us most of

¹ *Zoroaster*, pp. 219-223.

² For the argument that Magianism was Median in origin see esp. Prásek, ii. 114 ff.

³ W. Geiger (*Ostiran. Kultur im Altertum*, Erlangen, 1882, pp. 488-492) derives the Zoroastrian fire-priests (*athrasene*) from Media.

⁴ See, however, Moulton, p. 215 f.